



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
[www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov)

| APPLICATION NO.  | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR  | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|--|-------------|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/772,413   | 02/06/2004  | Christiaan H.P. Dirks | 4662-269            | 2078             |
| 23117  | 7590        | 12/23/2008            | EXAMINER            |                  |
| NIXON & VANDERHYE, PC<br>901 NORTH GLEBE ROAD, 11TH FLOOR<br>ARLINGTON, VA 22203 |             |                       |                     | ARAJ, MICHAEL J  |
| ART UNIT   |             | PAPER NUMBER          |                     |                  |
| 3775   |             |                       |                     |                  |
| MAIL DATE  |             | DELIVERY MODE         |                     |                  |
| 12/23/2008   |             | PAPER                 |                     |                  |

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

|                              |                        |                     |  |
|------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--|
| <b>Office Action Summary</b> | <b>Application No.</b> | <b>Applicant(s)</b> |  |
|                              | 10/772,413             | DIRKS ET AL.        |  |
|                              | <b>Examiner</b>        | <b>Art Unit</b>     |  |
|                              | MICHAEL J. ARAJ        | 3775                |  |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 September 2007.

2a) This action is **FINAL**.                    2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1,2,5-10,13,15-19 and 21-23 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1, 2, 5-10, 13, 15-19 and 21-23 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                     | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .                                    |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)          | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ .  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ .                        |

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 5, 6, 7, 13, 15, 17, 19 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bevan et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,725,582).

Bevan et al. disclose a method for tying together objects (31) including laying a surgical cable made of a biocompatible/polymer fiber, having two end parts, around at least part of the objects to be tied together, wherein the cable is twisted yarn having an eye/knot (29) at least on of the end parts; connecting the end parts of the cable together; exerting a torsion force on the end parts to thereby responsively bring the cable under tension required for tying together the objects with the help of a device (33); and locking the tensioned cable (26) against the influence of forces acting counter to the exerted torsion force thereon. It is seen that two ends have eyes with can be seen in Figure 5 (29 and adjacent to 22). The drawing force exerted on the cable is allowed due to the eyes of the cable when the device is twisted. The method fixed two vertebrae.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2, 18 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bevan et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,725,582).

Bevan et al. disclose the claimed invention except for the biber being of a high performance high molecular weight, high performance fibers and polyethylene fibers having a tensile strength of at least 1.8 Gpa and a modulus of at least 60 Gpa. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to the device of Bevan et al. with these materials having these features, since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. In re Leshin, 125 USPQ 416.

Claims 8-10, 16 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bevan et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,725,582) in view of Crouch et al. (US Patent Number 4,788,814), previously cited by examiner.

Bevan et al. disclose the claimed method except for the loop of fibers being closed by a splice, the splice comprising an air splice and the two end parts being connected by a splice. Crouch et al. disclose a method using air splicing and teach the use of air splicing to connect the trailing end to the leading end of the yarn (see

abstract). It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made for the method of Bevan et al., to include the loop of fibers being closed by a splice, the splice comprising an air splice and the two end parts being connected by a splice, in view of Crouch et al., to connect the trailing end to the leading end of the yarn. In addition, splicing /air splicing is well known in the art.

***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 2, 5-10, 13, 15-19 and 21-23 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MICHAEL J. ARAJ whose telephone number is (571)272-5963. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached on 571-272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Michael J Araj/  
Examiner, Art Unit 3775  
/Eduardo C. Robert/  
  
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3733